



H.R. 2828 – To provide compensation to relatives of United States citizens who were killed as a result of the bombings of United States Embassies in East Africa on August 7, 1998

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 2828 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-IL) on June 22, 2007. The Committee on Foreign Affairs agreed to seek consideration under suspension of the rules for H.R. 2828, as amended, by unanimous consent on September 26, 2007.

H.R. 2828 is expected to be considered on October 2, 2007.

SUMMARY

H.R. 2828 provides compensation for the dependents of U.S. Embassy employees who are killed by acts of international terrorism.

The bill increases the death gratuity for dependents of Foreign Service and Government executive branch employees to an amount equal to a year's salary at level II of the Executive Schedule. For foreign national employee victims, the gratuity is equal to one year's salary at the highest step of the highest grade on the local compensation plan in the country the employee was working in.

H.R. 2828 also authorizes the Secretary of State to pay the surviving dependents of those employees up to eight times the salary that the employee was receiving at the time of death.

For past victims, the bill directs the Secretary of State to pay the dependents of employees killed between January 1, 1998, and the date of enactment of this act (including victims of the August 7, 1998 bombing in Nairobi, Kenya) the maximum payment described above, except that the surviving dependents of U.S. citizen victims shall be paid ten times the specified salary amount (which, for purposes of this calculation, is \$94,000).

BACKGROUND

On August 7, 1998, two truck bombs were detonated within minutes of each other at United States embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Salaam, Tanzania which claimed the lives of 257 people and injured more than 5,000. Below are excerpts from an investigation into the bombings conducted by the State Department in January, 1999:

Bombing in Nairobi, Kenya

”On August 7, 1998, at approximately 10:30 a.m. local time, terrorists driving in a truck detonated a large bomb in the rear parking area, near the ramp to the basement garage, of the American Embassy in Nairobi. A total of 213 people were killed, of whom 44 were American Embassy employees (12 Americans and 32 Foreign Service National (FSNs) employees). Ten Americans and eleven FSNs were seriously injured. An estimated 200 Kenyan civilians were killed and 4,000 were injured by the blast in the vicinity of the embassy.”

“Damage to the embassy was massive, especially internally. Although there was little structural damage to the five story reinforced concrete building, the explosion reduced much of the interior to rubble--destroying windows, window frames, internal office partitions and other fixtures on the rear side of the building. The secondary fragmentation from flying glass, internal concrete block walls, furniture, and fixtures caused most of the embassy casualties. The majority of the Kenyan casualties resulted from the collapse of the adjacent Ufundi Building, flying glass from the nearby Co-op Bank Building and other buildings located within a two to three block radius. Other casualties were pedestrians or motorists in the crowded streets next to the embassy.”

Bombing in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

”On the morning of Friday, August 7, 1998, a truck laden with explosives drove up Laibon Road to one of the two vehicular gates of the US Embassy in Dar Es Salaam. Apparently unable to penetrate the perimeter because it was blocked by an embassy water tanker, the suicide bomber detonated his charge at 10:39 a.m. at a distance of about 35 feet from the outer wall of the chancery. The type and quantity of explosives are still under investigation.”

“The bomb attack killed eleven people; one other is missing and presumed dead. Another 85 people were injured. No Americans were among the fatalities, but many were injured, two of them seriously. The chancery suffered major structural damage and was rendered unusable, but it did not collapse. No one inside the chancery was killed, in part due to the strength of the structure and in part to simple luck. A number of third-country diplomatic facilities and residences in the immediate vicinity were severely damaged, and several American Embassy residences were destroyed, as were dozens of vehicles. The American Ambassador's residence, a thousand yards distant and vacant at the time, suffered roof damage and collapsed ceilings.” ([Report of the Accountability Review Boards on the Embassy Bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam on August 7, 1998](#))

COST

At the time of publication, a cost estimate was not available from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).

STAFF CONTACT

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